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VERGIL AENEID 1.694

In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 10.209 Dr. Knapp closes his discussion of Aeneid 1.694 and its implications as to the size and the identity of the plant *amaracus* with these words:

"One thing is plain. Whatever plant Vergil meant, he meant something big enough to give shade. It may be noted here that Vergil's myrtle was different from our myrtle, at least in Aeneid 3.23".

The crux of the passage seems to me to lie in the meaning to be attached to the word *umbra*. If *umbra* is the shadow cast by the plant, *amaracus*, then either Vergil's *amaracus* is hardly our *marjoram* (for identification offers too many difficulties), or the *amaracus* of the fairy grove of Venus is imagined by the poet as of heroic size, quite tall enough to cast a shadow. If we grant the assumption, either alternative is possible, although, in the light of Vergil's manner in the Aeneid, we might balk at the introduction of the hypothesis of a fairy grove to explain so slight a detail in the picture.

But is the assumption valid, that in 694 the poet has in mind the shadow cast by the *amaracus* bed in which Ascanius sleeps? Perhaps not.

In the first place, if we interpret the context literally and prosaically, we read that the substitution of Cupid was for one night only (683). In a grove at night plants do not usually cast shadows, although the surrounding darkness might with propriety be called *umbra*. Even if we insist that Dido's banquet began, Roman fashion, in the afternoon, Cupid was able to counterfeit the absent Ascanius by day as well as at night, as the real Ascanius slept peacefully in the distant grove of Venus.

In the second place, the citation by Ellis, on Catullus 61.6-7, of Columella 10.296 *sicubi odoratas praetexit amaracus umbras*, is not conclusive that the plant is thought of as casting any noticeable shadow, since (1) shadows are not fragrant, and *umbras* must be used there by metonymy; (2) in 297 ff. the contrasting shades or colors of different garden flowers are referred to, not to mention their odors (301 f.); and (3) the immediate context is almost a cento from Vergil's Eclogues: indeed the whole of Columella's tenth book is confessedly modelled on Vergil (compare 5 and 434), and such lines as Eclogues 10.76 and Aeneid 1.694 may have been in his mind. The citation from Columella and the Vergilian passage before us seem to require *umbra* = odor. The *ordo verborum* would then be *ubi amaracus mollis et adspirans dulci umbra floribus complectitur illum*. We might also construe *floribus* with both participle and verb; or we might assume the hendiadys *floribus et dulci umbra* = *suave olentibus floribus*.

Etymologizing is often risky but, without basing any argument on it, I would like to call attention to a suggestion by Professor Fay in The Classical Quarterly 11.212:

"From an *s* extension of the root <an 'to breathe'> as in O. Bulg. *achati* 'smell', we have Lat. *umbræ* (<onsrā>) 'Animal, Manes', to which *umbra* 'shadow' is a secondary development, due to the unsubstantiality . . . of the shadow". Were this root connection established, there would be a certain propriety in the phrase *adspirans umbra*.

But is the equation *umbra* = odor valid as a poetic metonymy? *Umbra* is defined by Lucretius (4.368-369) as 'air devoid of light', *lumine cassus aer*. *Aura* for *aer* is a common poetic usage. *Aura* for *odor* may be illustrated by Lucretius 2.850-851; Vergil, Georgics 4.17; Martial 3.65.2. How closely odor and shadow may be associated in the popular mind may be illustrated by the fact that Dicaearchus (Fr. 60) declares the odor of the *smilax* deadly, while Plutarch (Quaestiones Convivales 3.1.647 F) states that it was the

shadow. A similar superstition is even to-day associated with the shadow of the Javanese upas-tree. Lucretius (6.783-787) refers to the effects of both shadow and smell.

Another such baleful tree is the juniper, as in Vergil, Eclogues 10.75-76 *solet esse gravis cantantibus umbra, iuniperi gravis umbra*. But when Medea (Apollonius Rhodius 4.156 ff.) sprinkles her drugs on the dragon's eyes to produce narcotic effect, she uses a sprig of juniper; the odor of the drugs and perhaps of the juniper induces sleep.

In the passage of Vergil under discussion the *amaracus* may be thought of as exhaling a pleasing, not necessarily narcotic odor. The 'sweet smelling couch' is a commonplace in poetry. A word may receive some of its connotation from the context in which it is used.

Umbra, recalling the dim *lucos* and the darkness of the night, may retain its usual meaning, 'shade', while with *dulci adspirans* it may approximate 'invisible exhalation', 'effluence', 'odor'. At any rate in the Epicurean psychology a shadow was thought of as concrete. So in magic the shadow is treated as if it were the soul of the object that casts it (see Frazer, The Golden Bough).

Finally, if as applied to the *amaracus* the phrase "a plant breathing with sweet shade" need mean no more than "fragrant and shady plant", I have nothing more to say than that it would seem like a poetic licence. For an emendation *aura* for *umbra* I am not disposed to plead.

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GEORGE DWIGHT KELLOGG.

THE CLASSICAL CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

The 155th meeting of The Classical Club of Philadelphia was held on Friday, January 4, with 26 members present. The paper was read by Professor L. P. Shanks, of the University of Pennsylvania, on A Holiday in Provence. It was a delightful account of a three weeks' pedestrian tour of that charming section of France. With light and graceful touch Professor Shanks sketched his experiences, describing now the wonderful Roman remains, now the types of the people, from the beauties of Arles to the cousins of Tartarin. What the speaker modestly described as "a mere travelogue" was in reality a bit of descriptive writing of unusual literary excellence, humor, and charm.

B. W. MITCHELL, Secretary.

A TRANSLATION OF LEGRAND'S DAOS

Mr. James Loeb, already so well known for his services to the cause of the Classics, has enlarged those services by a translation of a very important book, the work entitled *Daos: Tableau de la Comédie Grecque*, by Ph.-E. LeGrand, professor in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lyons. I hope to review the translation presently. Meantime an idea of the value of the original work can be gained from the reviews of it by Professor H. W. Prescott, Classical Philology 5.377-380, and Dr. W. H. D. Rouse, in The Classical Review 25.255-256. For an excellent review of the translation, by Professor R. C. Flickinger, see The Classical Journal 13.77-79. C. K.

I leave it to the reader to determine whether I am right in thinking Professor Kellogg's explanation far-fetched. One point only will I discuss here. Vergil describes Carthage wholly in Roman terms: the pavements, the noise, the theater of 1,422 ff. all alike come from Vergil's experience of Roman cities (compare what Vitruvius says, 5.3 *Cum forum constitutum fuerit, tum decorum immortalium diebus festis ludorum spectationibus eligendus est locus theatro* . . .). So Dido's banquet is Roman. It began while it was yet day; hence there was need for shade for the sleeping Ascanius. The masquerading Cupid and Achaetes reach the banquet hall at 1.697; the coming of night and the lighting of the lamps are mentioned first at 726-727. C. K.